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METHODIST MASS

Donald C. Lacy

METHODIST MASS

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SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

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"Methodist Mass" was first held at the Union Chapel United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Sunday, July 4, 1971. It was prepared and celebrated by the Pastor, Donald Charles Lacy. It is a blend of the United Methodist Order for the Administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion and "The New Order of Mass" in the Roman Catholic Church. In accordance with the *Companion to the Book of Worship*, edited for the Commission on Worship of the United Methodist Church, the service is divided into five major parts.

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What others are saying about METHODIST MASS:

"A most significant liturgical effort."

Dr. Don E. Saliers
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"Your adaptation of the Roman Catholic liturgy and your own Methodist Service was, to me, very powerful and beautiful."

Sr. Agnes Louise
Marian College of Fond du Lac

"It is ecumenical in the finest sense, profoundly historical, and thoroughly Christian."

Dr. Mark Noll
Wheaton College

"METHODIST MASS"

THE ORGAN PRELUDE

I. REMEMBRANCE

SENTENCES

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

GREETING

Pastor: The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: **Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

COLLECT FOR PURITY

Pastor and People

Almighty God unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

KYRIE

Pastor: Lord, have mercy.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: Christ, have mercy.

People: **Christ, have mercy.**

Pastor: Lord, have mercy.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

GLORIA

Pastor and People

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, Heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take

away the sins of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.

II. PROCLAMATION

FIRST READING

Pastor

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Pastor

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HOMILY

Pastor

III. OFFERTORY

INVITATION

Pastor

Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort, and make your humble confession to almighty God.

GENERAL CONFESSION

Pastor and People

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men:

We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy divine majesty. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father. For Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness in life, to the honor and glory of Thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PARDON

Pastor

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of Thy great mercy

hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn to Thee: Have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMFORTABLE WORDS

Pastor

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If any one sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

SURSUM CORDA

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up unto the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

People: It is meet and right so to do.

VERE DIGNUM

Pastor

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

SANCTUS

Pastor and People

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Pastor

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by the one offering of himself, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again: Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee, and grant that we, receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his passion, death, and resurrection, may be partakers of the divine nature through him: Who in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples

saying, Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins; do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. Amen.

PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

Pastor

We do not presume to come to this Thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy table. But Thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to partake of this Sacrament of Thy Son Jesus Christ, that we may walk in newness of life, may grow into his likeness, and may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. Amen.

IV. PARTICIPATION

RECEIVING AND PRESENTING THE GIFTS Pastor and People

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

Pastor Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be Thy
and name, Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on
People: earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily
bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive
those who trespass against us; and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Pastor: Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us
peace in our day. In your mercy keep us free from
sin and protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joy-
ful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

People: **For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are
Yours, now and forever.**

AGNUS DEI

Pastor and People

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have
mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take the sins of the world;
grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

Pastor

V. THANKSGIVING

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor and People

O Lord, our heavenly Father, we, Thy humble servants, desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that, by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and Thy whole Church may obtain forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto Thee; humbly beseeching Thee that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion may be filled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses; Through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.

BLESSING

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: May almighty God bless you, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

DISMISSAL

Pastor: The Mass is ended, go in peace.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE

The following article (reprinted with permission) appeared in the January, 1973 issue of *The Interpreter* magazine on page 48:

UNITED METHODIST MASS — THE IDEA

The Rev. Donald C. Lacy of Union Chapel Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, describes a worship form that worked for that suburban Indianapolis congregation.

Friends and members of the Union Chapel Church in Indianapolis are being treated to a creative, ecumenical worship service that began in July, 1971. It is called a "Methodist Mass."

Worshippers enter the sanctuary during the organ prelude. Lay participation is at a maximum with pastor and laity sharing in fifteen of the twenty-four parts of the service. No attempt is made to differentiate between what is strictly "United Methodist" or "Roman Catholic." The service is interwoven as a unified worship experience, a total act of corporate worship.

The high point of the service is when worshippers kneel at the Communion railing. I distribute wafers bearing the crucifix in the paten, which are held for a few moments. I then pass by each one with the chalice containing grape juice. Each worshiper touches the wafer in the juice and places both contents into his mouth.

As I move from worshiper to worshiper, I simply say, "The Body and Blood of Jesus Christ." Occasionally, I reverse the procedure and ask each one partaking to say the words quietly himself.

The entire service from beginning to end is one of celebrating the Good News found in the birth, life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The most consistent feeling tone is "eucharistic" with the co-mingling and expression of human and divine gratitude at both the mystical and practical levels.

In accordance with the *Companion to the Book of Worship*, edited for the Commission on Worship, the mass is divided into five major movements with a grand total of twenty-four parts. Twelve parts of the service are from United Methodist Liturgy and twelve are from "The New Order of Mass" in the Roman Catholic Church.

The initial movement, *Remembrance*, includes sentences from the United Methodist service, a Roman Catholic greeting, the United Methodist "Collect for Purity," and the Roman Catholic "Kyrie" and "Gloria."

The next movement, *Proclamation*, is composed of the first reading with response, second reading with response, and the "Homily." All are taken from the Roman Catholic service.

Offertory is the most lengthy movement. It involves the United Methodist "Invitation," "General Confession," "Prayer for Pardon," "Comfortable Words," "Sursum Corda" and "Vere Dignum." They are followed by the Roman Catholic "Sanctus." The "Prayer of Consecration" and "Prayer of Humble Access" are both United Methodist.

The fourth movement, *Participation*, includes the Roman Catholic "Receiving and Presenting the Gifts," "the Lord's Prayer," and the "Agnus Dei." The "Distribution of the Elements" is United Methodist.

Thanksgiving is the final movement of the service. "The Prayer of Thanksgiving" is United Methodist. "The Blessing" and "Dismissal" are Roman Catholic. An organ postlude then allows worshipers to depart.

The idea dates back to my work as an assistant to a Roman Catholic chaplain several years ago. It came to be a part of my conscious thinking nearly two years ago when my article, "A Mother's Questions," was accepted and published in the Montfort Father's magazine, *Queen of All Hearts*.

When the summer of 1971 came at Union Chapel and the need to interest and inspire parishioners at an early service became imperative, I announced a series of forty-minute worship services called "Methodist Mass" would begin on July 4 and last through Labor Day weekend. It was extended on into October, and now is a regular first Sunday of the month experience in the contemporary worship service.

New possibilities are continually opening to relate to the basic movements and parts of the worship. For example, the youth choir sings various parts from time to time.

The response has been positive with many ministers and laymen alike inquiring to see what "Methodist Mass" is all about. Attendance has varied from sixteen to more than fifty. Some visitors have come to the service from far outside of the Indianapolis area to take their reactions back to their churches.

When a worshiper comes for the first time, he is usually surprised. The most consistent reaction among laymen is: "It's different and impressive" or words to that effect. From a more professional perspective I hope, with acceptance from the laity, that the Methodist Mass will eventually become a legitimate tool under the guidance of the Holy Spirit for "ecumenism" in the highest and best sense of the word especially among United Methodists and Roman Catholics.

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